

IOWA BIRD LIFE

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE
IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

VOL. XVIII

MARCH, 1948

NO. 1



OFFICERS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

President—Charles C. Ayres, Jr., Ottumwa, Iowa
Vice-President—Dr. Robert F. Vane, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Sec'y-Treas.—Miss Lillian Serbousek, 1226 Second St. S.W.,
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Librarian—Dr. Warren N. Keck, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Editor—Fred J. Pierce, Winthrop, Iowa

Executive Council:

Mrs. Harold R. Peasley, Des Moines, Iowa
Miss Zell C. Lee, Sioux City, Iowa
Miss Mary H. Young, Waterloo, Iowa

The Iowa Ornithologists' Union was organized at Ames, Iowa, February 28, 1923, for the study and protection of native birds and to promote fraternal relations among Iowa bird students.

The central design of the Union's official seal is the Eastern Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

Publications of the Union: Mimeographed letters, 1923-1928; 'The Bulletin,' 1929-1930; 'Iowa Bird Life,' beginning 1931.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$1.00 a year. Single copies 25c each. Subscription to the magazine is included in all paid memberships, of which there are four classes, as follows: Contributing Member, \$10.00 a year; Supporting Member, \$3.00 a year; Regular Member, \$1.00 a year; Junior Member (under 16 years of age), 50c a year.

EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE
WINTHROP, IOWA



COLOR PHASES OF HAWKS

Upper photograph shows an adult male Red-tailed Hawk in the melanistic phase, a specimen taken in northwestern Arkansas, January, 1929 (view from below).

Lower photograph is of an adult male Harlan's Hawk, taken in southwestern Missouri, January, 1929.

These photographs are reprinted from the "Wilson Bulletin, June, 1932, pp. 79, 81.

NOTES ON THE COLOR PHASES OF THE WESTERN RED-TAILED HAWK

By WILLIAM YOUNG WORTH

SIOUX CITY, IOWA

These notes are not intended to constitute a scientific article, such as the fine effort of Norman A. Wood, entitled "Harlan's Hawk," published in the "Wilson Bulletin," June, 1932. They are intended merely as a summary of several notes on Red-tailed Hawks, which the author wishes to bring up to date.

The Western Red-tailed Hawk is one of our hawk species in which color characteristics are so variable that often field identification is uncertain to say the least, and often is impossible. This is especially true of the black phase here in the Missouri Valley, where we also find black-phased Rough-legged and Swainson's Hawks, all migrating at the same time.

On October 28, 1946 (see Iowa Bird Life, XVI, No. 4, 1946), I saw two hawks which I called Red-tails. One was normal plumaged, the other black. They were in the same tree when I first flushed them, and since they alighted together in another tree, I felt reasonably sure that the dark one was a Red-tailed Hawk.

During mid-June of 1947, while doing some bird work in extreme eastern Montana, I was north of the town of Wibaux, Wibaux County, and there found a Red-tailed Hawk's nest with young. The parents were not too wild and I had many opportunities to watch both of them. The larger female was a typical Western Red-tail, but the male was the dark, brownish-black phase with a distinctly barred red and black tail. This incident points to the fact which P. A. Taverner ("Birds of Western Canada") discovered many years ago—that these black Red-tails mate with normally colored Western Red-tailed Hawks.

While in northeastern Kansas during the last week of January, 1948, I saw several hundred wintering hawks, and among them were about a dozen dark-colored ones, which I assumed were mostly Red-tails, though some probably were Harlan's Hawks, as their known wintering ground is from this area south.

The other color phase of the Western Red-tailed Hawk is the light phase, which is almost albinistic at times. This form has been called Krider's Hawk and is found quite regularly in the upper Missouri Valley during the nesting season and through the entire valley during migration. In years past, while traveling through western North and South Dakotas, the writer has found the light-colored Red-tail not uncommon. In eastern Montana in the summer of 1947 this sub-species was seen about as often as the normally colored Western Red-tail. It was not far afield, however, and very near home that the writer saw his most beautiful Krider's Hawk. The date was October 27, 1945. On a field trip on this date, near Stone Park and just outside the city limits, I saw a fine, large, light-colored Red-tail, which was nearly white over most of the body. It was set off by the palest of red tails completely without barring and nearly "immaculate", if I may borrow the words from Taverner. That field trip will long live in my memory.

The problem of determining the exact status of the several color phases of Western Red-tails is a challenge to ornithologists. It will have to be decided whether Harlan's Hawk mates with the Western Red-tail, whether Krider's Hawk mates with normal Red-tails, and there is the ever-present question as to where melanistic Red-tails fit into the picture, since most authorities contend they are not Harlan's Hawks because of their barred tails and other differences.

THE 1947 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

Compiled by FRED J. PIERCE

The Iowa 1947 Christmas bird census was a very successful one. We received reports from 19 stations, with a total of 73 species listed. Participants in the census numbered 82 persons. An important factor was the fine weather prevailing. Christmas week was one of mild temperatures and was thus an invitation to bird lovers to take to the woods and fields for the popular bird count.

The results of the census are always interesting and worth a careful study. Our tabulation shows that 27 species were reported at one station only; 11 species were reported at two stations only. Six species—Downy Woodpecker, Crow, Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Cardinal and Slate-colored Junco—were the only ones that appeared on all the lists. The Horned Lark, usually found during census week, was not reported at any station in 1947.

"Iowa Bird Life" began printing the Christmas census in tabulated form in 1938, when it printed the census for 1937. The first ten censuses were tabulated as follows:

1937—50 species, 10 stations	1942—39 species, 10 stations
1938—58 species, 9 stations	1943—62 species, 13 stations
1939—75 species, 18 stations	1944—57 species, 12 stations
1940—69 species, 18 stations	1945—66 species, 20 stations
1941—65 species, 13 stations	1946—75 species, 15 stations

The ten-year tabulation shows the average Christmas bird population to be 61.6 species. Anyone with a taste for statistical study can break down the ten years of tables into some very interesting figures which will show the fluctuation in numbers of various winter residents, and the presence or absence of other species during the years. Thus the results of our winter bird counts, taken for relaxation or in the spirit of competition, become a valuable contribution to Iowa ornithology.

Data on place, time, weather and the observers, who reported in the 1947 census are given below.

1. BACKBONE STATE PARK (Delaware County): Dec. 26; 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear most of the day, cloudy in late afternoon; about 1 in. of old snow and ice on ground; streams partially open; light NW wind, then SW; temp. 18° at start, 28° at return; 4 miles on foot, about 50 by car; trip included an auto ride from Winthrop to the park and return (return by different road), with roadside birds included in the census. Observers together most of the time. M. L. Jones, F. J. Pierce.

The flock of 42 Canada Geese was found swimming in stream at the south end of the Backbone Park. We approached within 100 yards before they took flight; they circled us several times, honking loudly. The Supt. of State Fish Hatchery said he had seen that or a similar flock in about the same vicinity ten days before.—F.J.P.

2. CEDAR FALLS (Goose Lake, Beaver Creek, Union Bridge, Snag Creek, Josh Higgins Park; river bottoms 35%, upland forest 25%, savannas 25%, fields 10%, marshes 5%): Dec. 24; 7:30 to 12 a.m., 1 to 4 p.m. Two hours of fog, rest of day clear; one-third of ground with 1 in. of snow; no wind; temp. 14° to 30°; total miles, 12 on foot, 24 by car. Martin L. Grant, Russell Hays, C. W. Robertson, Maybelle Brown, Blanche Schwanke, Myrtle Gaffin.

3. CEDAR RAPIDS (Cedar Lake, Ellis Park, Palo, C St. woods, Dark Hollow in Palisades-Kepler State Park; open woodlands, marshy area, lake,

roadside): Dec. 21; 9:15 a.m. to 12:30, 1:45 to 5 p.m. Clear; ground bare; Cedar Lake open and Cedar River and smaller streams partly frozen; light S wind; temp. 20° to 36°; total party miles, 15 on foot, 75 by car. Observers in 2 parties. Dr. and Mrs. P. P. Laude, Duane Nesetril, Rose Richards, Lillian Serbousek, Earnest Steffen, Dr. and Mrs. Robt. Vane, Myra Willis.

4. CLUTIER (on road to Clutier from Davenport; open fields and woods): Dec. 27; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast; ground bare; little wind; temp. about 32°; 4 miles on foot, 30 by car. Norwood Hazard.

5. DAVENPORT (vicinity of Credit Island, deciduous woods along Miss. River, oak groves and thickets): Dec. 23; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Ground bare; Miss. River open; no wind; temp. 26° at start, 32° at return; 3 miles on foot. Norwood Hazard, Rodney Hart.

6. DAVENPORT (Giddings woods, Credit Island, McMannus woods, Holy Family Cemetery, Stubbs woods, fairgrounds, Cedar St. creek woods, Fedj woods and park): Dec. 21; 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Clear; Miss. River open; slight wind; temp. 25° at start, 45° at return; 14 miles on foot. James Hodges.

The 6 Old-squaws were seen on the Miss. River near Credit Island, about 100 feet from shore. Sun behind observer, all birds were carefully studied with field glass; dark patch on the side of the head, long pin-like tail and black and white markings on side of body easily distinguished. All were adult males.

7. DES MOINES (Charles Sing Denman Wood, Greenwood and Ashworth Parks, Walnut Woods State Park, Des Moines Waterworks Impounding Reservoir, Crocker Woods and Waukonsa Park along the Des Moines River, Pine Hill Cemetery, Fisher's Lake, Sycamore Park, Dove Woods along Beaver Creek, Brenton Slough, Kinglet Woods; roadsides and open fields adjoining woodlands): Dec. 21; 7:45 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Mostly clear; ground bare; some open water; no wind in a.m., 7 m.p.h. in p.m.; temp. 18° at start, 37° at return; total party miles, 28 on foot, 131 by car. Seventeen observers in 5 parties. Mrs. Jos. Chamberlain, Irene M. Smith, Ruth Chapman, Annette Wilbois, Mrs. Toni Wendelburg, Olivia McCabe, Elizabeth Peck, Mrs. W. G. DuMont, Mrs. A. J. Binsfeld, Joe K. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Berkowitz, Woodward Brown, Mrs. H. R. Peasley, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Haskell, Bruce Stiles (Des Moines Audubon Society).

8. DUBUQUE (Linwood and Mt. Calvary Cemeteries, Eagle Point Park, City Island, Miss. River sloughs and road to Sinope Creek in Wisconsin; open fields 10%, pine woodlands 15%, deciduous woodlands 35%, river sloughs 40%): Dec. 21; 8 a.m. to 12, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Clear to partly cloudy; small amount of old snow in sheltered places; river open below dam and in small pools in channel above; no wind; temp. 25° to 40°; 7 miles on foot, 10 by car. Observers in one party. James Dockal, Henry Herrmann, Howard Hintz, Ival Schuster, Mrs. Pauline Ruegnitz, Mr. and Mrs. George Crossley.

9. FAIRFIELD (College campus, Old Settlers' Park, city reservoirs Nos. 1 and 2, Walton Lake and Walton Club golf course, Boy Scout tract, Chautauqua Park, Country Club golf course, city disposal plant, Crow Creek): Dec. 26; 8:30 to 12 a.m., 2 to 4:30 p.m. Clear; light W wind; temp. 25° to 36°; 15 miles on foot. John D. Goodman.

10. LACEY-KEOSAUQUA STATE PARK (Van Buren County): Dec. 27; 8 to 10 a.m., 2 to 4:30 p.m. Clear; lake and most small creeks frozen, river open with floating ice; moderate to brisk NW wind; temp. high 47°, low 30°; 5 miles on foot, 8 by car. List of birds at feeding station at dwelling included. E. R. Birdsall.

11. LAMONI (South Woods 1 mile south of city, Big Creek and adjoining woods): Dec. 26; 11 a.m. to 2, 3 to 4:30 p.m. Clear; ground bare; ice melting in

(Continued on page 8)

[illegible]

Red-bellied Woodpecker	4	4	4	3	4	3	9	5	2	2	1	3	8	5	5	2	2	2	2
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	1	1	1	1	8	3	1	16	4	1	1	4	1	2	10	2	6	2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	3	1	1	1	5	16	4	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	10	2	2	2
Hairy Woodpecker	1	10	13	4	5	9	62	11	5	5	8	8	5	4	10	36	1	4	1
Downy Woodpecker	1	10	13	7	7	14	46	25	23	4	5	8	8	4	10	36	1	4	1
Blue Jay	10	75	105	15	36	8	276	136	11	4	5	20	6	18	5	10140	2000	45	6
Crow	12	18	129	17	22	13	274	15	30	15	10	18	8	16	25	182	45	35	26
Chickadee	2	2	2	2	2	4	35	4	9	12	3	8	2	1	3	28	5	3	4
Tufted Titmouse	6	8	32	3	2	11	48	11	9	2	2	6	2	1	6	28	5	3	4
White-breasted Nuthatch	1	5	7	1	10	2	10	2	1	1	3	7	1	2	1	9	1	2	6
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	1	2	1	10	2	10	2	1	1	3	7	1	2	1	9	1	2	6
Brown Creeper	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Winter Wren	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Robin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Bluebird	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Bohemian Waxwing	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cedar Waxwing	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Northern Shrike	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Starling	20	30	30	8	3	3	533	7	7	7	5	10	2	7	8	400	750	50	45
English Sparrow	50	30	150	70	38	20	896	187	400	26	60	10	26	50	885	75	30	30	30
Meadowlark	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Red-winged Blackbird	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rusty Blackbird	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cardinal	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Purple Finch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pine Siskin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Goldfinch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
State-colored Junco	1	24	72	40	30	61	226	94	140	30	44	38	46	41	25	31	25	50	20
Tree Sparrow	1	24	72	40	30	61	226	94	140	30	44	38	46	41	25	31	25	50	20
Harris's Sparrow	1	24	72	40	30	61	226	94	140	30	44	38	46	41	25	31	25	50	20
White-throated Sparrow	1	24	72	40	30	61	226	94	140	30	44	38	46	41	25	31	25	50	20
Song Sparrow	1	24	72	40	30	61	226	94	140	30	44	38	46	41	25	31	25	50	20
Lairland Longspur	1	24	72	40	30	61	226	94	140	30	44	38	46	41	25	31	25	50	20
Number of Species	21	20	26	20	18	26	41	29	22	15	21	21	29	22	19	32	22	25	15
Number of Observers	2	6	9	1	12	1	17	7	1	1	1	1	3	3	4	18	1	2	1

*See data under station in body of article.

Total Iowa list 73 species.

creek; temp. 31° at start, 39° at return; 1 mile on foot, 3 by car. Mrs. W. C. De Long.

12. LEDGES STATE PARK (through Ledges to Boone and Jordan, and down Des Moines River to southern extremity of Boone County): Dec. 28; 8:30 a.m. to 12, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Thin clouds in a.m., clear in p.m.; patches of old snow; light wind changing from N to E during day; temp. 16° to 30°; 5 and 2 miles on foot, 40 by car. Observers together most of the time. Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Jones.

13. MOUNT PLEASANT (SW of city from Saunder's Grove to Big Creek; open wooded pasture with small streams): Dec. 21; 7 a.m. to 12. Clear and cold, warming up in late a.m.; almost no wind; temp. 15° to 25°; about 6 miles on foot, Helen Hallowell, Jos. Schaffner, Roy Ollivier.

The Wilson's Snipe was feeding along the edge of a creek and was flushed at close range; observed by all three persons. In previous years it has been seen in the same locality during winter.

14. MOUNT VERNON (center of town south to Ivanhoe, SE of Ivanhoe along Cedar River, Dark Hollow in Palisades-Kepler State Park, north of town to old golf course and Ink's Pond; open farmland 50%, deciduous woodland 45%, town 5%): Dec. 24; 7 to 11:30 a.m., 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Clear; ground bare; Cedar River partly frozen; wind 1-7 m.p.h.; temp. 16° in early a.m., 35° at noon; total miles, 14. Observers together. John C. W. Bliese, J. David Ennis, J. Harold Ennis.

15. OTTUMWA (country roads north and east of city and Cliffland): Dec. 28; 9:30 a.m. to 12, 1:30 to 5 p.m. Clear to partly cloudy; windy; temp. 40°; 2 miles on foot, 30 by car. Charles C. Ayres, Jr., Pearle C. Walker, Kenneth Richards, Bill Hoskins (Ottumwa Bird Club).

16. SIOUX CITY (War Eagle's Monument Park woods, confluence area of Missouri and Big Sioux Rivers, lower Riverside woods, Riverview Park, Riverside Park, area along road at foot of loess hills facing westward and lying between Stone Park and Riverside, Stone Park, Plum Creek area, Talbot Road, Logan Park, Northside, Westside, Graceland Park Cemetery, South Ravine, Crescent Park, Correctionville Road at 4900 block area, Brower's Lake, New Lake, Brown's Lake and woods, Morningside Nurseries area, River Road; hilly deciduous woods, pine and cedar growth 50%, river and lake country with wooded lowlands 30%, open hills 15%, town 5%): Dec. 21; 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Clear most of day; 6 to 8 in. packed snow and ice on ground in most sections but hills 20% barren of snow; rivers open in main channels, ice along banks; lakes frozen over; wind N, 5 to 15 m.p.h.; temp. 16° to 37°; total party miles, 51 on foot, 126 by car. Eighteen observers in 10 parties. Mr. and Mrs. Herrold Asmussen, W. W. Barrett, Don Bushar, Mrs. Dwight F. Davis, Mrs. E. A. Emery, Karl Kuhlmann, Dale Laffoon, Mr. and Mrs. Jean L. Laffoon, Zell C. Lee, Nick Margeas, Bob Nickolson, Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Schott, Gertrude Weaver, Bertha Wellhausen, Carl Wellhausen (Sioux City Bird Club).

17. SIOUX CITY (Missouri River bottoms, Hornick and Whiting vicinity to Little Sioux River Valley, Grant Center, Ticonic, Oto and back through hill country to Climbing Hill and Sioux City): Dec. 21; 7:15 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mostly clear; 1-2 in. hard snow on ground; S breeze; temp. 16° to 37°; 1 mile on foot, 98 by car. Wm. Youngworth.

The large number of Crows on this list is explained by a Crow roost extending for about 7 miles south of downtown Sioux City to Sergeant Bluff. As I drove along early in the morning the Crows were leaving the roost in countless thousands. The Missouri River stays open on this stretch due to hot water dumped by three big packing plants, and several large sewers draining into it.—W.Y.

18. TAMA (5 miles east and 5 miles north of city, along graveled roads by auto in a more or less timbered area): Dec. 28; 6 hours. Mostly clear; no wind; temp. 18° in a.m., 28° in p.m. Mr. and Mrs. W. G. MacMartin.

19. WOODWARD (4½ miles SE of town; woodlands, draws, brushy fence rows, open fields): Dec. 25; 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Partly cloudy; no snow; wind NW, 10-18 m.p.h.; temp. 34° to 30°; 3 miles on foot, 10 by car. Richard A. Guthrie.

THE BLUE GOOSE: IS IT CHANGING ITS MIGRATION THROUGH IOWA?

By BRUCE F. STILES

Assistant Director
State Conservation Commission
DES MOINES, IOWA

Except for the limited number of Blue Geese killed by Eskimos and Indians in the Arctic, and in the vicinity of St. James Bay at the southern tip of Hudson's Bay, and some poaching on the wintering grounds of the Blue Goose, its populations have in the past been relatively free from the hunting pressure that, without doubt, has been a limiting factor in the greatly reduced population of its larger relative, the Canada Goose. For many years the fall migration of the Blue Goose was high and nearly direct, and about the only point in the United States where numbers appeared in the fall in sufficient quantity to provide any shooting was near Cape Girardeau, Missouri. This was only a brief stopping point for very limited numbers.

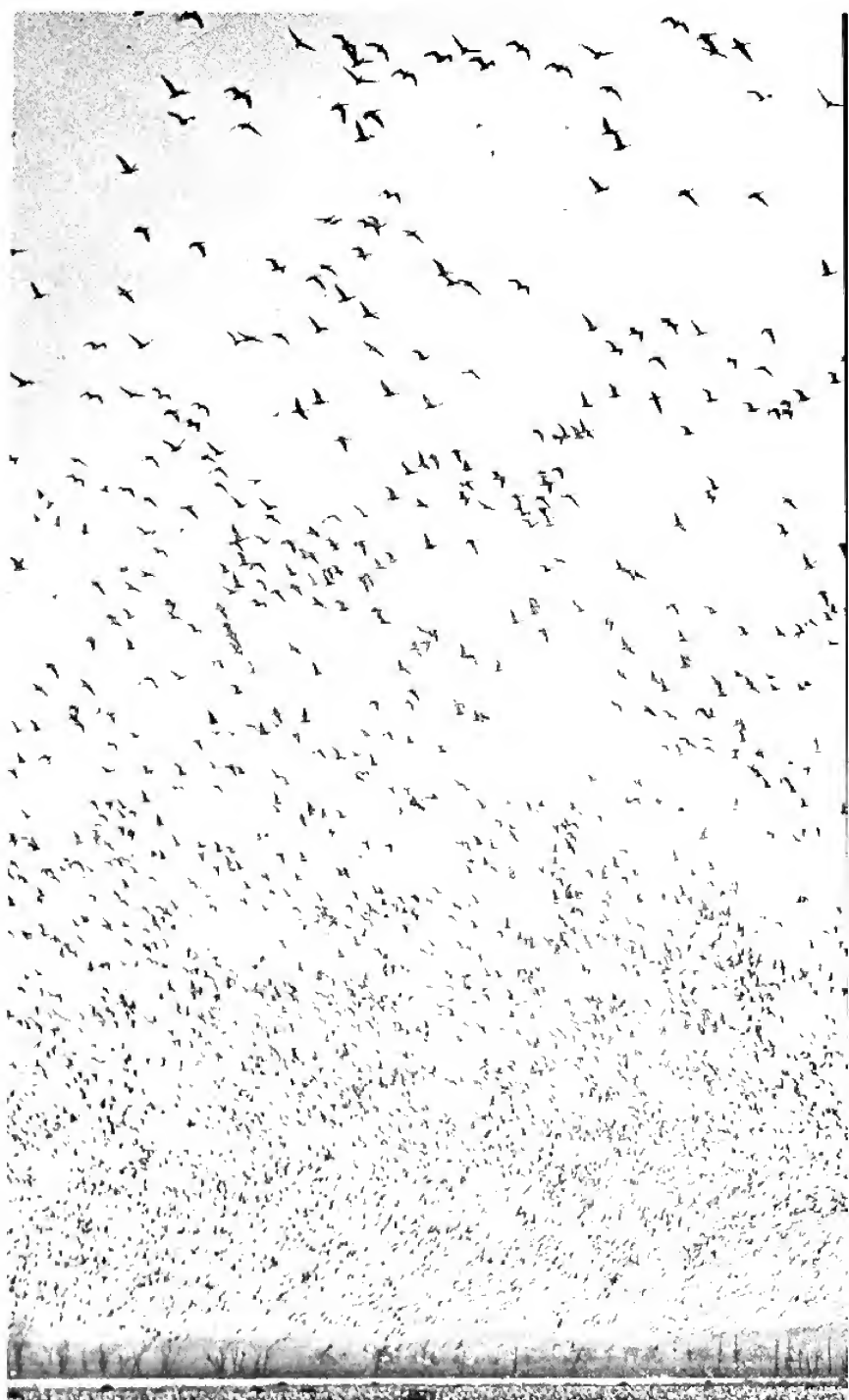
Beginning about 1940, we began to get a very few Blue Geese through central Iowa during the hunting season. The numbers taken by hunters seem to have increased very gradually until the fall of 1947, when an unprecedented migration of Blue Geese hit Iowa, the vanguard coming down across the northern boundary of the state October 22 and 23. Based upon newspaper accounts and the writer's contact with various sportsmen's organizations throughout the State of Iowa, I am inclined to believe that the fall migration of Blue Geese through Iowa had increased a hundredfold over any previous year. I have before me a newspaper clipping from the "Waterloo Courier" picturing five Waterloo hunters holding 18 Blue Geese and two Snow Geese. Such things are new to Iowa.

Has the Blue Goose changed its fall migration route and habits? All evidence available at this time would indicate that it has. Should this species eventually appear in Iowa during the hunting season in the same concentrations that appear here in the spring, this species might be in grave danger.

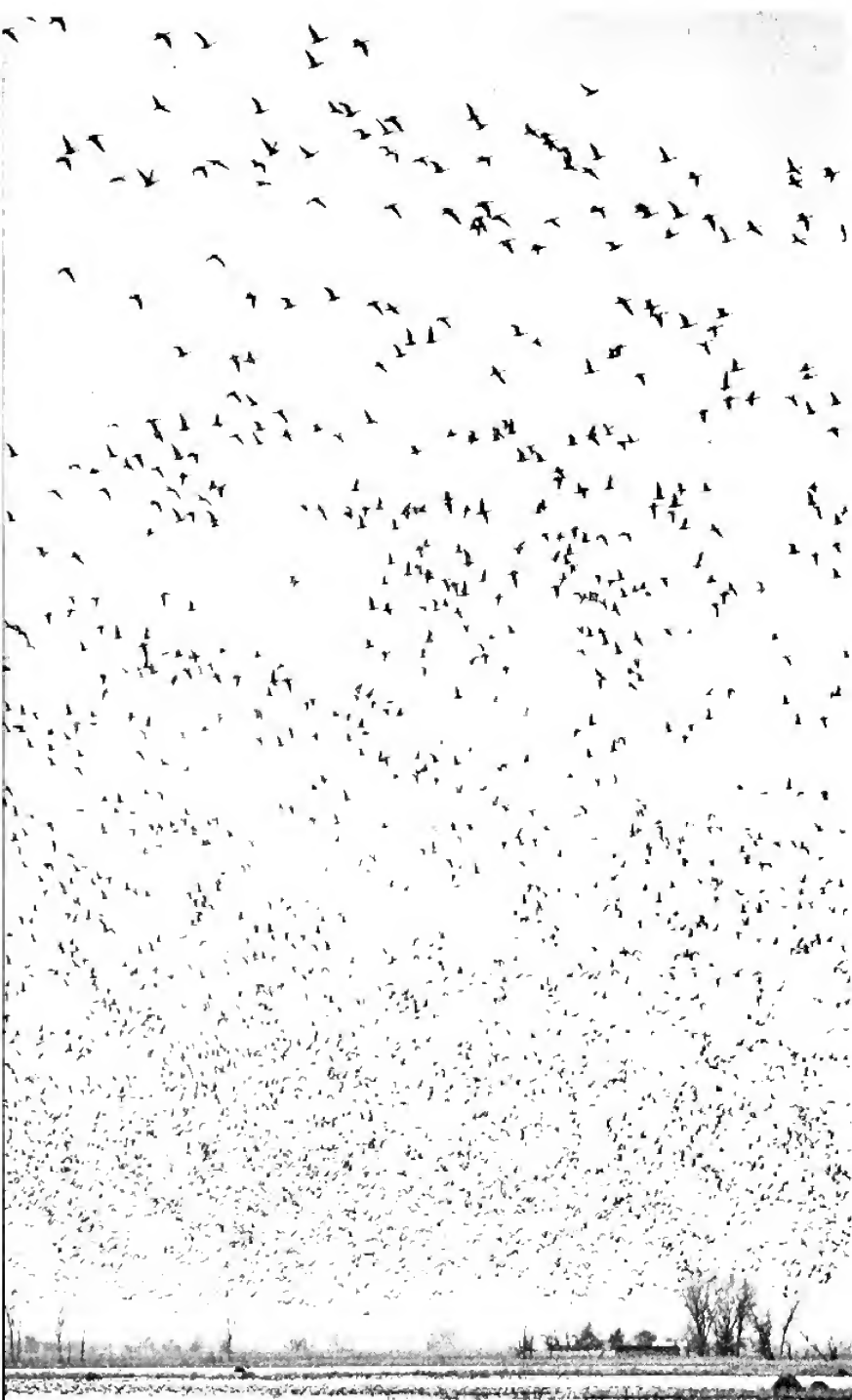
I am a hunter myself, and heartily approve the reduced bag limit placed upon geese recently by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. If the gun pressure remains constant, bag limits would be more effective. However, with an estimated increase in hunting pressure of somewhere near 20% over the last five years, it is apparent that there is little difference between a few hunters taking a large number of birds each or many hunters taking a smaller number of birds each.

When the legal bag limit on ducks and geese was placed at 25 in 1913 or thereabouts, probably not more than 4 or 5 million hunters were licensed to hunt in the United States. Should each hunter get his legal limit once

(Continued on page 12)



BLUE AND SNOW GEESE IN MIGRATION IN WESTERN IOWA



(Des Moines "Register & Tribune" photograph)

during the season, the take would be 125 million waterfowl. That was from a continental population of somewhere near 500 million birds. It is estimated that last year 24 million people were licensed to hunt and fish in the United States. Whatever the breakdown may be as to hunters and fishermen, it still remains apparent that even though the bag limit were 4 per day, the increased number of hunters would still take at least as large a percentage of the somewhere near 100 million migratory waterfowl that exist on the continent at this time.

I have absolute confidence in the ability and the integrity of the officials of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and I am equally sure that they are aware of this condition. Yet I am alarmed at what might happen to our Blue Goose population should their limited numbers concentrate in Iowa during the fall and be subjected to the same pressure that is exerted upon other species of waterfowl which are apparently much more able to adjust themselves to changing conditions. I do not know what, if anything, can or needs to be done about it at this time, and I only offer as a caution the thought that the ornithologists and conservationists of the state should watch carefully for any further indications of a major change in the fall migration habits of that most spectacular of all Iowa waterfowl, the Blue Goose.

One must first crawl before he walks, yet few bird lovers seem able to recognize a kindred soul in the hunter or that he, as well as they, is striving within the limited means of understanding possessed by each to satisfy a deep and primitive desire that can only find expression in mankind's oldest sport—the hunt. Ornithologists "bag" sight records; hunters bag the birds themselves. They are not as far apart as might appear on the surface. Our early ornithologists to the last man carried fowling pieces and collected their specimens. Substituting the binoculars for the gun was a slow process. Many duck hunters today are supplementing their autumn expeditions with dog and gun by spring excursions with a field guide and binoculars. In the common interest of preserving for posterity the magnificent spring migration of Blue Geese up the Missouri River Valley, this common bond must be recognized and strengthened.

The urge for people to find expression in the presence of wildlife in the marshes, fields, and woods is increasing at a tremendous rate. Without direction this is most often made manifest in the form of hunting with a shotgun. The increased pressure upon our wildlife continues and the end is not in sight. Game to be shot and carried home can no longer be furnished in sufficient quantities to satisfy the demand. More people must somehow enjoy our present and, in many instances smaller, wildlife populations. This is taking place, but too slowly. Each year more and more people gather along the Missouri River in March to see the "goose flight." Twenty-five years ago I witnessed it with few companions and was aware of a complete absence of public interest except as it might be related to poaching or indirectly associated with fall hunting. Now we are making some progress, but it is too slow. Instead of considering the hunter as an outsider, let's draw him closer into our circle. Let's teach him to enjoy wildlife without shooting it. Cultivate his interests that so closely parallel ours. Invite him to join our clubs and participate in our field trips. We will not convert him simply by condemning hunting; we must provide something equally interesting and stimulating in its place. We the ornithologists must be the missionaries. In fairness to him let us recognize that he pays the bill to protect our interests as well as his own. All enforcement of wildlife laws in Iowa is paid for out of hunting license fees. Our Pittman-Robertson program of purchasing and developing wildlife refuges is paid for by the hunter. Our Cooperative Research program

expense comes out of the hunter's pocket. He will confine his activities to shooting birds just as long and until he comes to know that there is another way to enjoy them. To perpetuate our wildlife we must change the thinking of the people who enjoy it.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE MIGRATIONS OF WATERFOWL

By ELLISON ORR
WAUKON, IOWA

In 1857 I was born in a log house beside the Old Military Road to Fort Atkinson, not far from McGregor, Iowa. In the same year my father bought 80 acres of wild land adjoining the town of Postville, 25 miles from the Mississippi River. This was nine years after the Indians were removed from the Neutral Ground Reservation, and five years after the land had been opened to settlement. Later my father made other purchases. For 40 years, as a boy and man, this was my home.

No one who did not see and know that land in its pristine beauty can conceive the abundance of the bird and wild animal life of those years of the early settlement. Seventy-seven species of birds nested within the limits of our boyhood excursions. These did not include the waterfowl, countless thousands of which passed by on their way to summer homes farther north.

The first of the waterfowl migration reached us as islands of bare ground began to appear in the fields. Their coming, like that of the Robins, the Bluebirds and the Meadowlarks, was a matter of course. It was so every spring—but with a few exceptions only a general recollection remains in my mind.

For a short time during the early spring, nearly every day from one to several flocks of the "Honkers," as we knew them, passed in a wedge-shaped formation. Usually there would be a small, disorganized flock a little to one side, or in the rear, near the end of the wedge. They always flew high, well out of shotgun range. Often we heard their clamoring in the night as they passed.

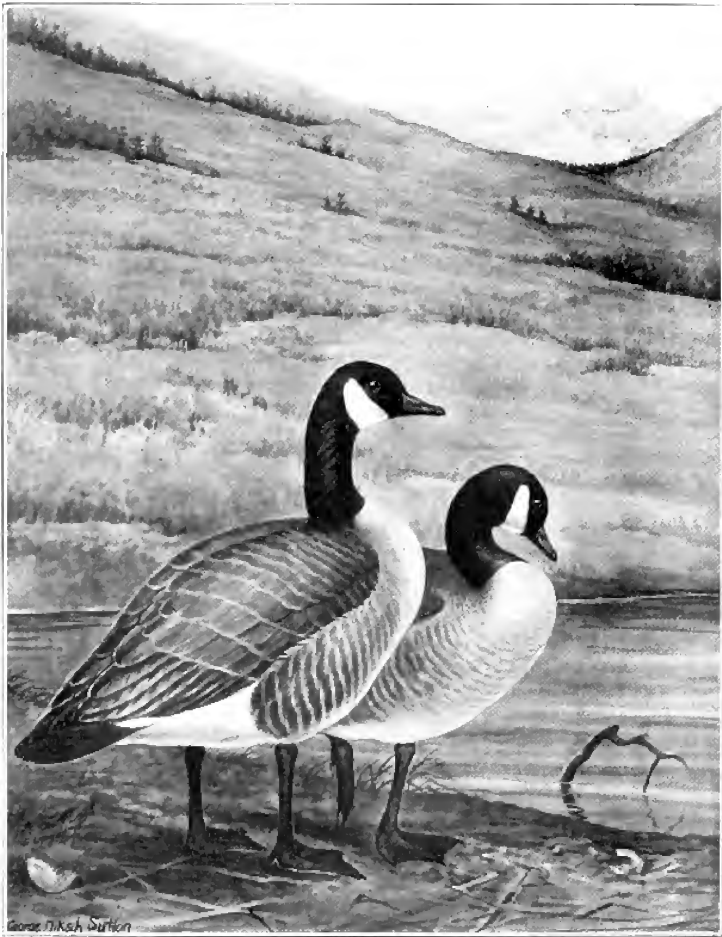
During the winter we would get out a pile of "sled-length" wood from the "timber lot" down on Yellow River. When warm sunshine and mild spring winds began to clear the fields of snow, we worked this up into "stove wood." If the geese were flying, as they usually were, we would keep the rifle handy and take a shot at any that came within range. A neighbor boy once brought down a gander. He boasted much about his skill, and he had a right to boast. We were not so lucky, but we got a thrill from trying. Occasionally during the spring migration the news of the day, circulated by word of mouth, would bring us the information that a flock of geese had "lit down" in Mr. So-and-so's field during the night, to rest and feed but had left early.

As I came out of the door early one spring morning, I saw a flock of geese in a stubble field, perhaps 60 rods away. I owned a good rifle and it occurred to me that I might be able to sneak up near enough for a shot and get a goose. But I never got that near. They were too wary and took off against the north wind toward and directly over me at a height of 40 or 50 feet. I was too astonished to shoot. They were disorganized at first, but before they had passed out of sight they had formed the usual wedge.

We seldom saw them flying other than in the regular wedge formation, and if that was disturbed, it was soon re-formed. Only once can I recall when

it was not. I was making a survey a couple of miles west of the Mississippi, when a small flock passed near me flying against a strong headwind. They were thoroughly disorganized—flying like a flock of ducks, just above the tree-tops, dipping down into ravines and rising over the tops of the bluffs that parallel the river. I cannot recall ever having heard of the geese flying up the immediate canyon of the river or alighting on its channels, lakes or ponds.

The numerous spring flights persisted well into the '70's, and then we saw them less and less, until the passage of a clamoring flock was an item of real news. We always thrilled to the sight and watched them as they passed quickly from our view—it recalled the days that had slipped by us into the past. If my memory is correct, the flocks of the spring migration very rarely



CANADA GEESE

From a painting by George Miksch Sutton.
Reprinted from "Wilson Bulletin," Sept., 1928.

exceeded 100. Fall migration flocks were much larger, when they came in waves, often in the night, and roused us with their calls. In later years they sometimes became bewildered by the bright electric street lights of the town. They circled about, low over the houses, and clamored loudly—which would bring out some shotguns. Once a fusillade of shots brought down a half dozen geese before they drifted away out of range and reorganized their ranks.

In late October, 1936, while on an archaeological survey in the valley of the Upper Iowa River, three large flocks of geese passed over us, at a height of about 800 feet. They were going west and were separated by about two miles. Some of the men with me tried to count them. In checking counts they concluded that very close to 800 had passed over, of which about 75 were in straggling, disorganized flocks. A teacher in a country school 18 miles to the south told me that on the same day the excited children came running in to tell her that wild geese were flying over. There were, she said, two large flocks headed almost straight west, and she thought there were about 100 in each flock. Those flocks that passed over us on the Iowa River in October, 1936, were the last "Honkers" I have seen.

Every spring the vast assembly of Blue Geese move slowly up the Missouri River in their migration. It appears that practically ALL of them are in this gathering. Judging from photographs, they are much given to circling about—much like a runaway swarm of bees. The Canada Geese did not migrate that way. They flew in flocks scattered over an extensive area of inland territory, and proceeded north without loitering. They usually alighted at night for rest and food, and moved on early the next morning. Only very inclement weather slowed them up.

In northern Saskatchewan I once saw a flock of about 2,000 Snow Geese about a small lake. They were very restless, and many of them circled above the water. At another time I saw a flock circling about high overhead, evidently to gain height, but I never saw them fly in level flight toward their destination.

A NESTING RECORD OF THE PILEATED WOODPECKER IN DUBUQUE COUNTY

By EMMETT B. and EDITH H. POLDERBOER

DYERSVILLE, IOWA

Pileated Woodpeckers have been seen in most of the northeastern counties of Iowa, east of the Cedar River drainage, by the writers during the past ten years. Although they seem to be present in small numbers in the densely timbered river valleys in this section of the state, we have not seen a recent record of their nesting in Iowa. It was our good fortune to find a nest of young Pileated Woodpeckers in western Dubuque County late in the spring of 1947.

While hiking through a stand of hardwood timber between Dyersville and Rockville, on the Delaware-Dubuque County line, on June 15, 1947, we heard the loud "wick-wick-wick" note of a Pileated Woodpecker. A moment later we saw the bird, an adult female, fly through a stand of trees along a bluff and alight on the side of a tall sugar-maple stump. A raucous noise similar to the sound produced by young Flickers indicated that the woodpecker was feeding young. The mother bird left the nest immediately after the feeding

but the young continued their noise-making for more than a minute after her departure.

The nest-stump was about 200 feet from us and we had no trouble finding it. The large oblong hole was on the southwest side of the stump and was about 30 feet above the ground. Two young were sticking their heads out of the hole as we approached the nest. One of the young retreated to the bottom of the nest and was not seen again; the other, a fully-fledged young male with a bright red crest, kept poking his head out of the hole as though anticipating the return of his mother with another morsel of food. Although we heard the mother bird in the nearby timber several times while we were observing the young, she did not return to the nest during the 15-minute period when we were watching it. The male parent was not seen at any time.

On June 20 we returned to photograph the young woodpeckers at their nest-stump only to find the nest deserted. Since the young were fully feathered when we first saw them, they must have left the nest within a couple of days after our first visit. If we allow approximately three weeks for the laying and incubation of the eggs, and another probable three weeks for the young to become fully feathered, the time of mating and the beginning of the nesting period must have occurred during the last week of April or the first week in May.

The nesting area was in the center of a tract of timber three miles long and varying in width from one-half to one mile along the meandering course of the North Fork of the Maquoketa River. The nest stump was on the west slope of a steep limestone bluff in a scattered stand of mature lindens and sugar maples. At the base of the bluff was a stand of silver maples and elms on a narrow flood-plain. Above the bluff the timber cover consisted of a dense stand of white oak saplings that had overgrown an area totally cut over 15 years ago. Adult Pileated Woodpeckers have been seen in this tract for the past five years, but prior to 1947 we had no knowledge of their nesting there.

ANNUAL CONVENTION TO BE HELD AT SIOUX CITY MAY 15 AND 16

Our convention this year will be in the form of a joint meeting with the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union, and will be held at Sioux City, Saturday and Sunday, May 15 and 16. The Sioux City Bird Club is acting as hosts to the convention and is handling all local arrangements. Interested groups from South Dakota, Minnesota and other regions are being invited to attend. The 1948 convention promises to be one of the finest in the history of our organization and offers exceptional opportunities for broadening our knowledge of bird life and for meeting many bird students from our neighboring states. At the time this issue is prepared for the printer the convention is in the early planning stages, but advance reports indicate there will be an unusually interesting and instructive program of papers and pictures, together with the usual pleasant social contacts and good fellowship. The Sioux City region is one of the best areas for bird observation in Iowa, as has been shown by the success of the field trips taken there during our several previous conventions. We expect the dates of May 15-16 to coincide with the peak of spring bird migration up the Missouri River valley.

The annual Ornithologists' Banquet will be Saturday evening. Dr. George Miksch Sutton, famed artist, author and ornithologist, will be the speaker of

the evening. The field trips, starting in various directions toward the best bird habitats and converging at a designated spot for noon luncheon, will occupy Sunday forenoon. A complete program, final announcements and other necessary information will be sent to each member at a later date.

Reservations for the field trip and banquet should be sent to Miss Zell C. Lee, President of the Sioux City Bird Club, 1423 Douglas St., Sioux City. Hotel reservations should be made well in advance of the meeting.

At this writing we are able to give only a preliminary announcement. But we are confident this will be one of the most important in our long series of annual meetings. We urge every member to keep the dates in mind and make all possible plans to be with us at Sioux City, May 15 and 16.

GENERAL NOTES

Nighthawk on Lofty Perch.—While visiting the campus of St. Ambrose College at Davenport, July 31, 1947, I saw a Nighthawk fly to and alight on the top of a 50-foot flagpole in the center of the campus. The Nighthawk perched on the small metal sphere on top of the pole. The ease with which it flew to and alighted on this unusual perch suggested that it had made frequent use of the pole as a perch.—JAMES HODGES, Davenport, Iowa.

Feeding Winter Birds.—During the winter I put out food for the birds. The following birds came to my feeders: Chickadees, Blue Jays, English Sparrows, Slate-colored Juncos, Starlings, a Blackbird or Grackle, Downy Woodpeckers, and Cardinals. Some food that I put out in a weed patch along the edge of a cornfield attracted Slate-colored Juncos, Tree Sparrows, a White-throated Sparrow, a Song Sparrow, Ring-necked Pheasants and Mourning Doves.—DENNIS CARTER, Thor, Iowa.

Red Crossbill in Scott County.—On November 22, 1947, I found an adult male Red Crossbill along Duck Creek in Davenport, just west of Harrison Street. This is the first record of the species in this area since 1906, when Burtis H. Wilson reported it as an irregular winter visitor.—JAMES HODGES, Davenport, Iowa.

Crossbills and Evening Grosbeaks at Clarksville.—On August 25, 1947, my mother, Mrs. E. B. Stevenson, and Mrs. Eldon Williams saw a flock of a dozen Red Crossbills at Clarksville, Iowa. At about the same time they saw a smaller number of Evening Grosbeaks. They were feeding on sunflower seeds when observed, and would cling to the face of the sunflower and eat out the seeds.—MRS. VERNON ULRICH, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Crossbills at Sibley in August.—Our grape arbor and sunflower patch attracted many interesting birds during the summer of 1947, and among the most important of these were eight Red Crossbills on August 13 and 14. There appeared to be seven females or immature birds, and I presumed the eighth was a first-year male, since it did not have the complete brick-red coloring shown in the books. During their two-day stay they remained on the flowers and ate the green seeds. A friend and I stood not more than 10 feet from two of them and watched their bills scissor off the shell of the seeds. These birds were quite tame but always took off in a flock. It was the first time I had ever seen this species around Sibley.—C. S. FITZSIMMONS, Sibley, Iowa.

Fall Migration Notes from Sioux City—Despite the fine weather during September and October of 1947, migration data were not so spectacular as in the 1946 season and not so many good records were made. The flight of swallows was small and over quickly, with only a few Barn Swallows lingering until October 15. The last Nighthawks were seen on October 6, and Chimney Swifts were not seen after October 7. One Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen on October 7. I missed the usual heavy flight of vireos, and found only the Myrtle Warbler as a common migrant this fall. Orange-crowned Warblers were seen in small numbers almost daily from September 27 to October 7. My first fall records of Palm Warblers in 19 years were made on October 5, with about a dozen of the birds on the 6th and single birds on the 7th and 8th. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were not seen until October 6; they usually arrive several weeks earlier. According to my records, both the Slate-colored Junco and the Harris Sparrow were about two weeks later in arriving than usual.

The hawk migration in the fall of '47 was very disappointing and not a dozen hawks in all were seen. Most of these were Sharp-shinned, Marsh and Red-tailed Hawks. The only interesting record was an Osprey, which was seen near the Missouri River on September 9. A small flock of Canada Geese was seen on October 23, and on October 6 hundreds of Franklin's Gulls flew over, with the big flight on October 22, when the gulls went over all day long and numbered many thousands.

On November 11, while hunting in the hills of eastern Woodbury County, we flushed a Northern Shrike and watched it fly off with a portion of a small bird, probably a Junco or Tree Sparrow. Numerous small flocks of from 10 to 15 Meadowlarks were also seen, but 10 days later, while hunting in southern Sioux County, they were getting scarce and only a few were seen. Newcomers were taking the Meadowlark's places. They were Lapland Longspurs from the north, and although only in flocks of tens, they were present to herald the coming of cold weather. Several flocks of Mallard ducks, from 100 to 400 birds, were flushed from cornfields. One Marsh Hawk and one Rough-legged Hawk were also seen. On December 9, a Sharp-shinned Hawk was noticed worrying about the neighbors' pigeons; it was around again on December 11.—WM. YOUNG WORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

RECENT BIRD BOOKS

WILD WINGS, by Joseph James Murray (John Knox Press, Richmond, Va., 1947; cloth, 8vo, pp. 1-123, with 15 illustrations from photographs; price, \$2.50).

This book is in the class of "appreciation" books. The author, a Virginia minister, has made bird study his lifelong avocation, and he writes charmingly of his field trips and experiences with birds. He has the ability to appreciate and describe the beauties of nature as they are revealed in his home Valley of Virginia. The result is a collection of delightful chapters about the birds he has seen on his walks. It is not a reference volume or handbook of birds, but the sort of book one likes to read for relaxation. The reader accompanies Dr. Murray on his field trips, through the medium of vivid description, and enjoys with him the hundreds of bird experiences that he has had in the beautiful Virginia countryside through all the seasons of the year.

The book is divided into four parts. The first part is devoted to trips around the author's home, which is at Lexington, Virginia. The second part takes the reader on a longer tour. By a series of brief chapters he visits the Great Dismal Swamp, the Back Bay country, White Top Mountain, Paradise Swamp in North Carolina, and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

A little later he is on the Kissimmee Prairie and follows the Tamiami Trail in Florida, finally exploring the Florida Keys. Dr. Murray's pages are filled with wild wings of many colors, and one gets the urge to visit the southeastern coast and see these interesting birds at first hand.

The third section of the book describes European birds, when the author visited England, Scotland, France, Switzerland, Germany and Holland. The fourth and closing part contains an article on Audubon, and another on "Jesus and Nature," followed by a discussion of birds mentioned in the Bible.

Fifteen photographic reproductions, all but four of them from Allan D. Cruickshank's negatives, add considerably to the attractiveness of the volume. A colored plate of White Ibises in flight, by F. L. Jaques, taken from Howell's "Florida Bird Life," is used on the jacket and should have been given a permanent place in the book.—F.J.P.

HOW TO ATTRACT THE BIRDS: PLANTING, FEEDING, HOUSING. by Robert S. Lemmon (American Garden Guild & Doubleday Co., Garden City, N.Y., 1947; cloth, 12mo, pp. 1-126, with 30 drawings; price, \$1.50).

The numbers of bird lovers grow from year to year, and this little book will fill a definite need for a low-priced publication giving advice on how to attract birds about the home. A great deal of information is packed into its pages, while numerous line drawings and bird house plans supplement the written text. There is a chapter discussing various houses and shelters, with house measurements given in tabulated form for a dozen species. Another chapter tells how to attract birds by feeding and the best foods to use. This is followed by a detailed compilation of the trees and shrubs that may be planted both for ornamental purposes and attracting birds. Drinking pools and bird baths are also described. A chapter on birds' nests and another briefly touching migration will give many persons having only a slight acquaintance with birds a desire to learn more about them. The little book is just what many people have been wishing for, and it should have a wide circulation.—F.J.P.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

"Audubon Magazine," in its January-February issue, printed a number of photographs taken at the annual meeting of the National Audubon Society last October. Our President, Charles Ayres, Jr., appears in two of the pictures. We wish the National Audubon meetings were not held so far away and that more of our Iowa members could attend them.

Harry E. Rector of Vinton, a state conservation officer, has resigned his position, effective July 1, to become Executive Secretary of the Iowa Izaak Walton League. His new work will include the publication of the "Iowa Waltonian," the League's quarterly magazine. Mr. Rector is well known as a lecturer and conservation authority in eastern Iowa. He has addressed the Cedar Rapids Bird Club and many other organizations. He was organizer and director of the first wildlife school for boys, which was held under the joint sponsorship of the State Conservation Commission and a Buchanan County sportsmen's club, at Littleton, Iowa, in 1944. The school proved to be a great success and a fine educational venture, and many similar wildlife schools for boys have been held over the state in the past three years.

REQUESTS DATA. James Hodges, 3132 Fair Ave., Davenport, Iowa, is making a study of the status and distribution of the Pileated Woodpecker in Iowa, and would appreciate having notes on the habits and occurrence of this

species as observed in different areas of Iowa. Exact localities and dates are desired.

The Audubon Screen Tours have been brought to many Iowa cities during the past winter and have been enjoyed by large audiences. This is talent from outside the state, of course. We have a number of lecturers among our Iowa members who are prepared to give bird and nature talks to interested groups. Sometime we would like to make up a list of these available speakers, their subjects, their rates, and other information which would be useful to local clubs who would like to use their services. Our President, Charles Ayres, Jr., does considerable lecturing to nature groups, and is prepared to give several different lectures. A very successful one which he has recently developed is entitled, "Only Seven Wonders of the World?" It deals with the wonders of nature and concludes with the showing of a collection of fluorescent rocks. Another of his lectures, on bird migration, illustrated by electrically lighted maps, has been heard by many of our Iowa members and thoroughly appreciated.

Mrs. Ross J. Thornburg, a former Des Moines member now living in Arizona, writes us that she and her husband have made up a series of Kodachrome slides of western and southwestern birds, animals, western scenes and flowers for the use of nature clubs. Among the slides are 50 bird pictures showing the rare Coppery-tailed Trogon, which is found in the United States only in the mountains of southern Arizona, Roadrunner, Pyrrhuloxia, Verdin, Cactus, Rock and Canon Wrens, and many others. The animal pictures include moose, antelope, elk, deer and bear. Each slide has a printed lecture description. A charge of \$15, plus mailing charges one way, is made for the use of the slides. Mrs. Thornburg should be addressed at Route 2, Box 369, Tucson, Ariz. Mrs. Thornburg writes: "We finished up a wonderful summer and added many new birds to our list on our trip through western United States. In Oregon we had opportunity to study Pileated Woodpeckers close at hand as they worked at the base of trees. Saw many Chestnut-backed Chickadees in Oregon, and some Harlequin Ducks playing and feeding in the rough surf. In California we saw Ancient Murrelet, Yellow-billed Magpie and Heermann Gull, all new to us. We enjoyed seeing many Winter Wrens in the Northwest, also Golden-crown Kinglets and Wren-tits. We saw the Great Gray Owl and three or four Pygmy Owls. Here on the desert our same birds welcomed us home, or at least welcomed the feed we provide. Our Rock Wren, which left on March 19 apparently to go higher for nesting, was here when we returned and was as friendly as ever."

THE 1948 SPRING BIRD CENSUS

President Ayres announces that the state-wide spring bird census will be taken on the week-end of May 7-8-9. All participants—individuals or local groups—will take their census on any area they choose, on one of the three dates mentioned. The census should contain the data on hours, place, weather, mileage, names of observers, etc., as given in the censuses published in past years. Records of unusual birds should be accompanied by full descriptive evidence. Send censuses to Charles C. Ayres, Jr., 208 East Second St., Ottumwa, Iowa. The lists will be compiled and put into tabulated form in the Ayres law office. The decision as to whether or not the censuses will be published in "Iowa Bird Life" rests with the Executive Council. If the decision is negative, the reports will be mimeographed and made available in this form for those who wish to have copies of them.